

VZCZCXRO7077
RR RUEHDE
DE RUEHMS #0999 3071057
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 031057Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0928
INFO RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
RHEFHLC/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0033
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 0012
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0001
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0001
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0045
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0041
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 0001
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0001

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000999

SIPDIS
STATE PLEASE PASS TO DHS/CBP TODD HORTON AND RICH DINUCCI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/11/03
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [EWWT](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: SECURE FREIGHT INITIATIVE (SFI): OMAN OPPOSES 100% SCANNING

REF: MUSCAT 875

CLASSIFIED BY: Richard Schmierer, Ambassador, Department of State,
Embassy Muscat; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) The Director General of Customs in Oman told us unequivocally that he did not support 100% scanning of U.S. bound containers at the Port of Salalah, as it would have too much impact on trade. He emphasized that it was not practical nor did it provide enhanced security. He strongly advocated a data-driven risk-assessment model as a more effective choice for balancing security and trade needs. In an October 25 meeting with the DG, Brigadier Issa al-Kiyumi, and Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, and Embassy personnel, the DG asked if we could just "make 100% scanning go away."

¶2. (C) In the first working-level meeting with the Port of Salalah to establish operational parameters for the SFI pilot (reftel), Senior Operations Manager Dustin Stoker reacted very strongly to a suggestion that the pilot include 100% scanning of U.S. bound containers. (Note: The current concept of operations is to conduct non-intrusive imaging (NII) scans for only containers that alarm at the mobile radiation detectors. End Note.) He said that it would require a manual operation in his planning department to force the containers to be scheduled for the NII scan; however, he thought that was doable. His primary concern was the impact on productivity. In an attempt to estimate the impact of sending 100% of the containers to the somewhat remote NII scanner, he described the difference in productivity in moving empty containers from ships to a location roughly the same distance away as the NII scanner. Moving to a nearby location the port is averaging 28 moves per hour per crane, where moving the longer distance reduces productivity to roughly 14 moves per hour. Although he was willing to run limited tests to collect data on 100% scanning for SFI, he emphasized the business impossibility of halving productivity on a regular basis. When asked if the port could add an extra tractor to address productivity, Stoker said it costs roughly 400,000 Omani Rials (US\$1.04M) per year to add one additional tractor, as they have a fixed staffing model at the port.

¶3. (C) Comment: The strong negative reaction of both port and government officials to 100% scanning, in otherwise extremely positive and cordial meetings, is an indication of the type of resistance the USG will face in continuing to advocate this policy. While the port and Omani officials are willing to pilot test equipment and run limited tests to get concrete numbers on the

productivity impact, they remain strongly opposed to the concept of scanning 100% of U.S. bound containers in the long term. End
Comment.
Schmierer